ANNUAL REPORT
of the
STANDING COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES

1987

Mr. George Archibald, M.L.A.
Chairman

The Third Session of the
Fifty-Fourth General Assembly

ANNUAL REPORT
to the
HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
of the
STANDING COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES

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Annual Report
Standing Committee on Human Resources

The Committee

The Standing Committee on Human Resources was established by the House of Assembly on March 27, 1987. The members of the Committee are:

Mr. George Archibald, M.L.A., Chairman
The Honourable John MacIsaac
The Honourable Laird Stirling
Mr. Gerald Lawrence, M.L.A.
Dr. R. Colin D. Stewart, M.L.A.
Mr. Alexander McIntosh, M.L.A.
Dr. William Gillis, M.L.A.
Dr. James Smith, M.L.A.
Mr. John Holm, M.L.A.

Secretary:
Ms. Dianne M. Stillman

Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference of the Standing Committee on Human Resources are set forth in the Rules and Forms of Procedure of the House of Assembly, page 41, **COMMITTEES**, 60 (2) for greater certainty:

(e) The Standing Committee on Human Resources is established for the purpose of considering matters normally assigned to or within the purview of the Ministers and Departments of Labour, Education and Vocational and Technical Training and matters relating to the Status of Women.

The Report

The Annual Report of the Standing Committee on Human Resources was prepared by Ms. Dianne M. Stillman through the services of the Committees Office of the House of Assembly, which is responsible for the clerical and administrative support of the Committee System.

Minister Not On Committee

(5A) With the exception of the Attorney General, who shall serve as Chairman of the Law Amendments Committee, no Minister shall be appointed to a Standing Committee established for the purpose of considering matters normally assigned to or within the purview of that Minister or that Minister's Department.

Acknowledgements

The Committee expresses its appreciation to the Witnesses for their time and co-operation. The Committee also thanks the staff of Hansard Reporting Services, Province House Staff, and the staff of the House of Assembly Committees Office.

The Committee also acknowledges, with gratitude, the co-operation of Mr. Speaker, Arthur R. Donahoe, Q.C. and his staff.

Annual Report
Standing Committee on Human Resources

Meetings Held

Date	Represented
April 7, 1987	Preliminary Meeting
April 14, 1987	Nova Scotia Teachers' Union
April 28, 1987	Department of Vocational and Technical Training AND Nova Scotia Confederation of University Faculty Associations
May 5, 1987	Nova Scotia School Boards Assoc. AND Students' Union of Nova Scotia
May 12, 1987	Department of Education - Student Aid Division
May 26, 1987	Worker's Compensation Board of Nova Scotia
September 22, 1987	Nova Scotia Institute of Technology -Tour of Facility-
October 27, 1987	Advisory Council on the Status of Women
November 17, 1987	Students' Union of Nova Scotia AND Department of Education -Student Aid Division
January 26, 1988	College of Geographic Science Lawrencetown, N. S. -Tour of Facility-

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Preliminary Meeting
April 7, 1987

The Committee met briefly to discuss suggestions by members regarding an agenda. It was decided that representatives of as many as possible of the following groups would be invited to appear:

EDUCATION

- Nova Scotia School Boards Association
- Students' Union of Nova Scotia (SUNS)
- Council of Nova Scotia University Presidents
- Nova Scotia Teachers' Union
- Nova Scotia Confederation of University Faculty Associations
- Atlantic Conference on Learning Disabilities
- Nova Scotia Home and School Association

LABOUR

- Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia
- Nova Scotia Federation of Labour
- Employment and Immigration Canada

STATUS OF WOMEN

- Advisory Council on the Status of Women
- Women's Action Committee

VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL TRAINING

- Department of Vocational & Technical Training

NOVA SCOTIA TEACHERS' UNION

April 14, 1987

Witnesses: Mrs. Karen Willis Duerden
President

Mr. Ron Morrison
A/Executive Secretary

In their opening remarks, the Witnesses briefly outlined the history of the Union as well as its legal and formal structures.

Points Raised

Unfunded Liability of Teachers' Pensions

The Committee remarked upon the Auditor General's Report in which it was stated that contributions to the Teacher's Pension Plan are too low and an increase of approximately ½ of 1% on both sides is necessary in order to pay for the benefits that are currently being earned.

The Witnesses noted the Union's position on this situation as follows:

1. The unfunded liability, in their view, is "a notional figure and the importance of the notional figure is a matter of professional judgement and the professionals who judge it are actuaries, not necessarily auditors or lawyers, nor certainly teachers".

2. The NSTU definition of unfunded liability: "the amount that would have to be paid by the Nova Scotia Teachers' Pension Plan were the schools of the province to go out of business, cease operations..."

In an effort to find a solution to the problem:

a) An NSTU Committee has been formed to study the Teachers' Pension Plan and its management.

Nova Scotia Teachers' Union
...continued

b) A bi-partisan Commission (NSTU/Government) has been established to manage the pension fund.

c) The NSTU proposes to employ alternate investment strategies in the hope that this will eliminate the need for increased contributions.

Children With Special Needs

Exceptional-

NSTU has been compiling research data that will aid in furthering the needs of exceptional children.

Learning Disabled-

In providing programs for learning disabled children, the NSTU feels that a co-operative effort between the Departments of Health, Social Services and Education is necessary.

Further, that although NSTU does not have a policy on the 'whole language method' of teaching learning disabled children, they suggested the Committee contact the following organizations for specific information:

-Nova Scotia Reading Specialists Association
-International Reading Association
-Primary and Elementary Teachers Association

Role of Women in the Union

The Witnesses noted that representation by women in the Union appears to be steadily increasing.

Nova Scotia Teachers' Union
...continued

Female Student Enrollment in High School Physics and Mathematics

According to enrollment figures produced by the Search Division of the Nova Scotia Department of Education, there is no significant difference between male and female enrollments in these areas.

Teacher Evaluation

A tripartite committee consisting of representation by NSTU, the Department of Education and the School Boards Association has been established to study the criteria used in the evaluation of teachers.

Future Goals of NSTU

The Nova Scotia Teachers' Union has substantially committed itself to the following:

a) the improvement of policies on teacher assessments (to be done in conjunction with the Department of Education and several school boards);

b) the improvement of teacher-student interaction;

c) the establishment of a teaching effectiveness program; and,

d) the study of other educational systems in relation to our own (i.e. the British system of school and community-based school boards).

COMMENT:

The Witnesses expressed their concern that, given its mandate, no woman sits on the Standing Committee on Human Resources.

DEPARTMENT OF VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL TRAINING

April 28, 1987

Witnesses: Dr. J. H. Clarke
Deputy Minister

Mr. B. J. Nicholson
Deputy Minister

The Witnesses circulated and read from a statement which dealt with the issues, problems, opportunities and priorities of their department.

Points Raised

Funding

The Witnesses expressed their concern that a decrease in Federal support (39% over a three year period) has resulted in several programs being cut with a net loss of fifty-seven (57) positions.

They anticipate more of the same for next year.

**Community Colleges/
Trade Schools**

The Committee was advised that the Nautical Institute will be moved to Port Hawkesbury in September, however, the fire-fighting training will still be carried out in Waverley and some MED and upgrading will be done in Halifax.

It is anticipated that a paper on the proposed Community College System should be ready by the end of June. A management system has already been established whereby facilities, program and staff qualifications are regularly checked.

The Department of Vocational and Technical Training.....continued

Training of Women

In an effort to promote the role of women in non-traditional occupations, the Department is involved in a local, regional and national campaign.

On June 12, 1987 a conference of labour market representatives and Status of Women Ministers was held in Halifax to discuss this issue.

Division of Program Development

Under the direction of Mr. Peter Woods, the Division is responsible for the operation of the province's Apprenticeship Program, the Nova Scotia Training and Employment Program and the National Institutional Training Program.

Division of Planning and Evaluation

Under the direction of Mr. Wayne Doggett, the Division is responsible for identifying labour/market needs, surveys of vocational school graduates and is presently involved in two major projects:

a) a survey of 6000 Nova Scotia businesses to determine training needs, AND

b) the preparation of a comprehensive counselling document in conjunction with the Youth Initiatives Office.

The Department of Vocational and Technical Training.....continued

Youth Initiatives Office

Under the direction of Ms. Kathie Swenson, this Division provides counselling to youths aged 15 to 24, with the following aims:

a) getting dropouts back in school or into training programs;

b) developing a learning disability resource centre;

c) conducting Project Nova which combines five (5) weeks of work experience with three (3) weeks of classroom effort dealing specifically with counselling; and

d) operating a resource centre on careers, counselling, etc.

The Division is also responsible for the publication, "Directions", which lists all courses available in Nova Scotia in vocational, technical and university education and training. These books are sent to all schools in the province.

NOVA SCOTIA CONFEDERATION OF UNIVERSITY FACULTY ASSOCIATIONS

April 28, 1987

Witnesses: Mr. John D'Orsay
Executive Director

Dr. Guy Chauvin

Prior to making opening remarks, the Witnesses circulated a brief to the Committee Members, which made particular reference to the Confederation's views on unemployment, free trade, the level of educational attainment by Nova Scotians and a Community College System.

Points Raised

Royal Commission on Post-Secondary Education

The Committee was advised that the Confederation does not (at this time) support the uniting of Nova Scotia universities, as recommended by the Royal Commission and have presented a brief to the Minister of Education, expressing this view.

Funding

The Confederation is of the opinion that grant increases have not kept pace with the growing student population. They cited examples of government support for education in other regions as compared with this province.

Educational Attainment of Nova Scotians

The Confederation is concerned that in some areas of the province (particularly on the South Shore), there appears to be a substantial need for improved access to universities.

Nova Scotia Confederation of
University Faculty Associations
...continued

Community Colleges

Although the Confederation supports the need for a Community College System, it does not agree with the proposition that Community College courses be considered as university credits.

Free Trade

The Confederation views a free trade agreement with the United States as undesirable in light of the fact that American educational attainment is much higher than that of Canadians.

NOVA SCOTIA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

May 5, 1987

Witness: Mr. Reid McVicar
Vice-President

The Witness declined the offer to make an opening statement, deferring instead to the questions of the Committee.

Points Raised

Funding

A major concern of the Association is that the policy of determining funding on a per student basis, combined with the current trend of decreasing enrollments, has resulted in some schools facing financial difficulties. This is particularly true in rural areas.

NSTU Negotiations

The School Boards Association feels strongly that it should become an equal partner in the negotiation process, particularly in the areas of salaries and benefits. They feel that under the present system, their concerns are not taken seriously and are quite often overlooked.

Teachers' Salaries

According to the Association, teachers' salaries in this province are excessive. Nova Scotia ranks at least second and quite possibly first in Canada, with an average wage of $ 40,000. per annum. They base their opinion on the state of Nova Scotia's economy in comparison with some of the wealthier provinces.

The School Boards Association
of Nova Scotia.....continued

Health Education
-Smoking

The Association has endorsed the 'I Quit' Campaign of the Nova Scotia Teachers' Union and is working very closely with the Heart Foundation in initiating programs to create smoke-free areas in schools throughout the province. For example, of the schools in Colchester-East Hants, ten out of forty-eight are smoke-free, with another fifteen or twenty working toward that goal.

Health Education
-AIDS

The Association is currently involved in the study of an AIDS education program. This program will emphasize good health practices and abstinence as a first priority. The use of condoms will be recommended as the most viable alternative. Parents will be consulted prior to the program being implemented.

Elected School Boards

The Witness noted that "the School Boards Association is on record at their last two annual meetings in supporting fully elected school boards."

STUDENTS' UNION OF NOVA SCOTIA (SUNS)

May 5, 1987

Witnesses: Mr. Royden Trainor
Chairperson, SUNS

Mr. Scott Christiansen
President
Kings College Student Union

Ms. Caroline Zayid
President
Dalhousie Student Union

Mr. Barney Savage
Dalhousie University Student

Mr. David MacDonald
Dalhousie University Student

The Witnesses distributed two documents:

- Report of the SUNS Task Force on Student Aid in Nova Scotia, AND
- Presentation to the Human Resources Committee of the Nova Scotia Legislature

which detailed their concerns and objectives. They emphasized their points with the aid of charts and diagrams.

Points Raised

Nova Scotia
Bursary Program

SUNS sees the following as serious problems for Nova Scotia students:

1) The amount of money a student must borrow ($2900) before being eligible to apply for a bursary in this province, results in an excessive debt load by the time they graduate.

The Students Union of Nova Scotia
.....continued

2) The amount of bursaries (max. $1700) has not kept pace with the cost of living. In 1981-82, the Nova Scotia Bursary Program and the Canada Student Loans Program split the cost of the student aid package almost equally. Since that time, loans have increased from $1800 to $2750 BUT bursaries have remained unchanged.

Problems Associated with the Department of Education - Student Aid

SUNS is concerned about frustrations being experienced by Nova Scotia Students when dealing with the Department of Education. Some of the major issues are:

1) Communication-

Students find it very difficult to get through to members of the department by telephone.

Public information on Student Financial Aid (particularly in high schools) is inadequate.

2) Counsellors-

There appears to be a serious shortage of available counsellors to serve the needs of Nova Scotia students. SUNS feels that at least one more counsellor should be hired.

3) Delays in Processing Applications-

In many cases, delays appear to be the result of applicants being unfamiliar with application procedures.

Students' Union of Nova Scotia
...continued

November 17, 1987

In an effort to follow up on the concerns raised on May 5, 1987, the Committee invited SUNS to appear at a second meeting.

Witnesses:
Mr. Royden Trainor
Chairperson, SUNS

Mr. Chris Hopper
Campaign Co-ordinator, SUNS

Mr. Robin Hamilton
Executive Officer, SUNS

Mr. Joe Morrison
External Vice-President
Dalhousie University

Mr. Rob MacIsaac
External Vice-President

Mr. Chris Van Buskirk
External Vice-President
Acadia University

Mr. George MacBain
University of King's College

Mr. Michael Wallace
University of King's College

Mr. Rand Tilden
Mt. St. Vincent University

The Witnesses distributed a paper entitled, 'SUNS Proposal for a Nova Scotia Student Aid Advisory Committee' as well as a copy of an Agenda of the issues they intended to raise. They made a detailed opening statement with the aid of charts and diagrams.

Students' Union of Nova Scotia
...continued

Points Raised

Debtloads

The Witnesses expressed the view that the debtload of Nova Scotian students, which has increased by over 100% since 1981 is unevenly distributed, thus creating a disincentive to attend university. They referred to the following figures, making particular note of the decrease in the average bursary between 1981-82 and 1986-87.

COMPARATIVE STATISTICS

	1981-82	1986-87
Distribution of Student Aid:		
- Loans	52%	68%
- Bursaries	48%	32%
Average Loan	$1,628	$2,942
Average Bursary	$1,308	$1,272

SUNS has suggested to the Minister of Education that a loans remission program, similar to that of New Brunswick, be taken into consideration. Concern was expressed by a Committee member over the equity of such a system and it was agreed that further study and discussion, likely by the Student Aid Advisory Committee, would be beneficial.

Student Aid Advisory Committee

Provision is made for this Committee in the Nova Scotia Student Aid Act, 1972. As a result, the Students' Union of Nova Scotia presented a brief to the Minister of Education urging him to appoint such a Committee and presenting him with a list of SUNS recommendations regarding composition

Students' Union of Nova Scotia
...continued

and mandate. On June 17, a committment was made by the Minister, and it is anticipated that this Committee will be established in the near future.

An issue that SUNS feels could be best dealt with by the Student Aid Advisory Committee is the repayment of part-time student loans. They feel that the current term of thirty days creates unnecessary hardship on the student. The extension of this period to one year, as suggested by a Committee member, would, in their opinion, be of little help.

The Premier's Advisory Council

SUNS was delighted to have been appointed to the Premier's Advisory Council approximately a year and a half ago, but as yet, no meetings have been held. This has created some debate within their organization as to the credibility of the Council.

**Report of the
Royal Commission on
Post-Secondary Education**

With regard to duplication of educational programs, as referred to in the above report, SUNS does not have a set policy. They note, however, that universities appear to have recognized this problem and have, since 1985, been in the process of co-ordinating their programs.

Educational Opportunities

SUNS is of the opinion that post-secondary education should be linked much more closely with secondary education to ensure that all high school students get an equal opportunity to pursue a university education. A major concern is the improvement of accessibility to post-secondary educational institutions particularly in rural Nova Scotia.

Students' Union of Nova Scotia
...continued

It was noted that high school students are currently facing a shortage of textbooks.

Community College System

SUNS anticipates the following problems should a Community College System be established:

(a) In SUNS' opinion, the government has not adequately funded the post-secondary education sector; and they question whether the Community College System will be dealt with in a similar manner.

(b) Community Colleges could become the only option for prospective students, because of financial concerns.

Caucus Presentations

SUNS approached each political party requesting the opportunity of appearing before caucus. The two opposition parties responded to their request and SUNS met with each of them for frank informal discussions. The Witnesses noted that SUNS would be pleased to meet with the Progressive Conservative Party as well.

Federal/Provincial Cooperation

The Witnesses expressed concern that the government of Nova Scotia has yet to make a definite committment on their participation in a federal review of the Student Loan Program.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION - STUDENT AID

May 12, 1987

Witnesses: Mr. A. C. Carras
A/Co-ordinator - Student Aid

Mr. J. R. Levangie
Chief Director - Finance & Budgeting

The Witnesses declined the offer to make opening remarks, deferring instead to questions from the Committee with the stipulation that some questions might be better directed to the Minister of Education.

Points Raised

Bursaries

In response to statements made by the SUNS group, the Witnesses reported that bursary levels have been increased by 5 3/4% for the current year. Further, that the Department expects that recent changes in criteria for applicants will result in more students being eligible for the maximum available bursary.

They noted that in 1986-87 there were 15,800 applications for student aid. Out of this group, approximately 7,500 qualified while another 1,500 made appeals. The majority of applications for student aid (75%) come from university students, with the remainder from trade and vocational school students.

Counsellors

The Department recognizes the possible need for additional staff and is prepared to make an assessment once the following are evaluated:

a) a recently installed telephone system;

The Department of Education
- Student Aid....continued

b) revised administrative procedures (including having the entire process begin ten days earlier than in the past); and

c) a new computer system.

Communications

The Department anticipates that the situation, as remarked upon by the SUNS group, will be greatly improved by recent changes in policy and equipment as follows:

a) New Telephone System-

Personnel and equipment needs will be more readily determined with the assistance of this new system which has the capability of monitoring calls.

b) Walk-In Centres-

Centres have been set up in Halifax and in Sydney to "establish a presence out there that students can come in and get some assistance in preparing their applications."

The Committee suggested that a toll-free information line be installed in order to serve the needs of students in rural areas. (Note: Several weeks after this meeting, the Committee was informed that a toll-free information line had been set up for a considerable length of time and has been in almost constant use.)

Part-Time Student Loan Program

The Witnesses noted that since this program was established four years ago "by the Federal Government without much prior consultation with the provinces" it has been considered a "problem area" among student aid personnel across Canada.

The Department of Education
- Student Aid....continued

Information to be Forwarded to the Committee at a Later Date

At the meeting, the Witnesses agreed to provide the Committee with the following information::

-criteria used in assessing student applications for loans and bursaries;

-detailed analysis of tuition increases over the past two years in relation to the Bursary Program;

-statistics on the number of appeals and approvals of same and reasons for the final decision;

-breakdown of student loans/bursaries in relation to institutions other than universities and colleges; and

-rates of interest on the repayment of student loans.

The above was received over the next few months and is included with the Submissions package (a complete set of written submissions and presentations which were made to the Committee during 1987), which is available in the Legislative Library.

Department of Education
-Student Aid
...continued

November 17, 1987

On the afternoon of November 17, 1987 (following a morning session with SUNS), the Committee met again with representatives of the Department of Education - Student Aid Division.

Witnesses:

Mr. J. R. Levangie
Chief Director
Finance & Budgeting

Mr. A. C. Carras
Director of Financial Services

Ms. E. A. MacDonald
Director
Student Aid

In his opening remarks, Mr. Levangie introduced Ms. MacDonald, recently appointed as Director of Student Aid, and commented on a number of issues that had been raised at the spring meeting.

Points Raised

Bursary Program

An estimated $10.6 Million will be spent in the bursary program this year...an increase of approximately $600,000 or 6% over 1986-87. This year applications for financial assistance have been processed months head of schedule due to a concentrated effort by the Department to speed up the process in an efficient manner. Further program improvements are currently being studied.

As the bursary maximum has not increased since 1981, the Department has compiled recommendations, to be considered by the Deputy Minister and Minister. If approved, these will then be sent on to Cabinet.

Department of Education
-Student Aid
...continued

Of the 16,000 applications for assistance in the 1986-87 academic year, 14,122 received assistance and less than 1700 were appealed.

Applications for assistance are subject to an assessment by the Department which includes the type of program they are attending. This program must be 12 weeks in length (minimum) and be offered by a recognized post-secondary institution, i.e. university, vocational school, trade school, etc.

Part-Time Student Loans

The part-time student loan program is administered by the Federal Government. It was noted that in Nova Scotia last year, 110 out of 137 people who applied, received assistance.

A Committee member referred to a point which was raised by their meeting with the SUNS group in that, single parents who happen to be on assistance are discouraged from seeking to improve themselves with an advanced education because the amount of the bursary is then deducted from their other benefits.

Communications

Although changes made this past year have proven successful, the Department is looking at more ways to improve their telephone system. A study conducted by Maritime Tel and Tel this fall indicates that the Department averages 161 incoming calls per day. The Department also feels it is necessary to have additional staff during peak times of the year to man the telephones. It is essential, of course, to ensure that these staff are well-trained.

Since last meeting with the Committee, the Department is pleased to report that the following measures have proven successful: a) walk-in centres, established in both Sydney and Halifax, and, b) enhancements to the Department's computer system have ensured that accurate, current student information is readily available.

Department of Education
-Student Aid
...continued

The Department is endeavoring to deal with the issue of incomplete application forms, which generally result in appeals, thus making the whole process much longer than necessary. Students must be better informed as to how to complete these forms.

Release of Information

A new policy is in existence this year, stating that information on appeals may only be released in writing, and not over the telephone as in the past. A Committee member expressed the view that, the need for privacy is outweighed considerably by the hardships suffered by the student when forced to wait an extra week or two for the decision to arrive. Although the universities are notified by a member of the Department of the circumstances surrounding the appeal, it was noted that these institutions often charge late fees, thus placing a further financial burden on the student.

One reason that the Department has adopted this policy is that the staff manning the telephones may not be fully aware of the circumstances surrounding particular appeals and clarification may be required that can only be done in writing.

Further, an Order in Council states that decisions of the higher appeal board must be ratified by the Minister of Education before they become official. This step in the process, which creates an even longer delay in transmitting the decision of the board, was not generally practiced prior to the arrival of the new Director of Student Aid. A Committee member expressed concern that this is an unnecessary step and should be eliminated.

Concern was expressed by a Committee member that the Department of Education, in deference to the Privacy Act, will not communicate directly with Vocational School counsellors on matters relating to student appeals, but only to the students themselves.

Department of Education
-Student Aid
...continued

Federal/Provincial Cooperation

The witnesses noted that consultations and discussions are regularly held between the Department and federal officials and cited the recent National Forum held in Saskatoon as an example of federal-provincial cooperation.

Students Union of Nova Scotia

The Department values the input of SUNS and feels it necessary to maintain a good working relationship.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD OF NOVA SCOTIA

May 26, 1987

Witnesses:

Mr. Reg Allen
Chairman and General Manager

Mr. Jerry Langille
Director - Claims

Mr. Darrell Nelson
Assistant Director - Claims
(Adjudication)

NOTE: Acting as Chairman on this occasion was Dr. C. W. MacNeil, M.L.A.

The Witnesses declined the offer to make opening remarks and deferred to questionning from the Committee.

Points Raised

Assessments

The Witnesses advised the Committee on the procedures followed in the assessment of a claim. They stated that the examination of the claimant by Workers' Compensation Board doctors "is not carried out until all the treatment has been completed and the doctors have done the best they can to make the person as whole as they can." Approximately six months following the completion of medical care, the following procedures are carried out:

1. An assessment is made on the basis of an examination by the Workers' Compensation Board doctor. A permanent medical impairment schedule is used as a guide to assist in the evaluation.

2. The physician's evaluation is then passed on to the Permanent Disability Awards Committee which is comprised of the Assistant Director - Claims (Adjudication), the Director of the Rehabilitation Department, and the Supervisor of Pensions who take into account a number of other factors.

Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia
.....continued

3. Each case is treated on an individual basis with the following taken into consideration:

   -whether the claimant is back to work or not and doing the same job as prior to the accident;

   -the actual medical measure of the impairment;

   -whether the Rehabilitation Department has been involved with the claimant; and

   -how much of the disability is determined to be related purely to the work injury and how much to other factors.

The Committee expressed the concern that, in many cases, claimants are denied permanent disability status because it is determined by the Board that they are retrainable, when, in actual fact, they are not.

Back Injuries

The Board finds it very difficult to assess back injuries because, "there is a great difference between the objective measurement of what the back will do and what it won't do and what the subjective complaints may be as regarding pain, the ability to work...."

Delays in Processing Claims

When delays occur, they are generally the result of one of the following reasons:

-medical specialists (particularly in Cape Breton where there is only one chest specialist) have, due to their heavy caseloads, occasionally been late in forwarding the necessary documentation.

Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia
.....continued

-employers are sometimes late in forwarding their forms. The Board is presently studying various incentives designed to encourage employers to co-operate more readily.

Employment After Rehabilitation

The Committee expressed the concern that employers are often reluctant to hire workers who have been through the rehabilitation process, even though their disability is partial.

In response, the Witnesses noted that the Board is presently working on a program "which is quite close to fruition" involving employers (including the Civil Service Commission) in an effort to combat this problem. No details are available at present but the program has been approved by the Board of Commissioners and it is anticipated that it will be in operation by the Fall of this year.

Differing Medical Opinions

The Witnesses pointed out that when the Workers' Compensation Board physicians disagree with the family physician and specialist, it could be for one of the following reasons:

1. The claim is not deemed to be a work-related injury.

2. If based on a past injury or claim, the "medical diagnosis may be inconsistent with what we have as records of what the original accident was." The claimant's personal doctor(s) would not likely be aware of this data, which of course, must be taken into consideration.

3. In some cases, the patient misinterprets what his/her doctor has said.

Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia
.....continued

Public Awareness

In an effort to improve public relations, the Witnesses reported that the Board is currently developing better methods of providing public information on benefits and the procedures to apply for them.

Further, the Board is open to providing information sessions (upon request) throughout the province.

Revenue from Devco
(Automatic Assumption)

The following information was provided to the Committee on June 4, 1987 in response to a request made at this meeting:

Item	Cost	Total
General Administration & Medical Aid	$ 8,184,893.47	
Administration	683,275.48	$ 8,184,893.47
Old Silicosis: Compensation & Medical Aid	$ 736,756.33	
Administration	27,799.87	$ 764,556.20
Automatic Assumption: Compensation & Medical Aid	$ 3,668.636.84	
Administration	167,558.57	$ 3,836,195.41
		$13,468,920.56

Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia
.....continued

Coverage - Small Business

The Committee learned that firms or organizations with less than three (3) employees (i.e. commercial fishermen and volunteer firemen) are not compelled to provide coverage, however, this coverage is available to them at a rate of $3.05 per $100.

Homeowner Coverage

In the case of casual laborers (i.e. housepainting, lawn-mowing, etc.), it is not compulsory for homeowners to provide coverage but they can do so at a rate of 2.1% of the wages being paid to the laborer.

NOVA SCOTIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
-Tour of the A.M.T. Centre-

September 22, 1987

Hosts: Mr. J. H. Clarke
Deputy Minister
Department of Vocational & Technical Training

Mr. P. Joseph Driscoll
Principal - N.S.I.T.

Mr. Joe Allan
Head Instructor - A.M.T. Centre

After viewing a film presentation of the A.M.T. (Automated Manufacturing Technology) Centre, the Committee was taken on a tour of the facility.

The facility is housed in a recently constructed extension to N.S.I.T. and was officially opened in May of this year. The Centre will accommodate up to 60 students. The Program is 46 weeks long and graduates receive diplomas in either machining, production or support technology. Funding for the Centre is provided by both the federal and provincial governments through the Advanced Manufacturing Support Agreement.

A goal of this program is to provide a reserve of highly skilled people in the field of industrial automation. This could attract more industry to this province. Pratt & Whitney Canada Inc. have recently set up business in the area and their decision to do so was based, in part, on this training scheme. Twenty-six out of thirty-six graduates from last year's class have been hired by Pratt & Whitney and they anticipate hiring a further 750 workers over a ten year period. Other Nova Scotia employers who have hired graduates of the program include: Maritime Tel and Tel Co., Michelin, National Research Council and High Tech Inc.

The computer system consists of a VAX 11/785 minicomputer, CAD/CAM, robotics, computer numerical control units and microcomputer laboratories.

Students demonstrated the operation of the high-tech equipment in the Centre, with which they program the units to design and cut machine parts according to pre-set specifications.

Following the tour and luncheon, the Committee conducted a brief business meeting to set an agenda for Fall meetings.

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

October 27, 1987

Witnesses: Ms. Debi Forsyth-Smith
President

Ms. Jane Wright
Researcher

The Witnesses distributed a prepared statement which outlined the mandate of the Advisory Council, its accomplishments to date and future goals.

Points Raised

Partisanship

Concern was expressed that the President of the Advisory Council appeared to be in violation of the Civil Service Act. Particular reference was made to an advertisement which appeared in a local newspaper in which it was announced that she would be appearing as a guest speaker at a Progressive Conservative Party function.

The Witness felt that, as this function was in honor of women in the community, she was justified in attending. She noted that she had also attended functions which were sponsored by the Liberal and New Democratic Parties.

She stated further that she was appointed by a Cabinet Order-In-Council, and as such, was not governed by the Civil Service Act. It was pointed out by a Committee member, however, that in light of recently passed amendments to the Act, persons such as herself were now included in its jurisdiction.

There was expressed support around the table for both views.

Pay Equity

The Witness reported that on average in this province, women earn $ .60 to every $1.00 earned by male workers. The goal

The Advisory Council on the
Status of Women...continued

of the Council is to have women earn equal pay for work that is of equal value to the employer.

With the full support of their Minister, the Advisory Council is undertaking research into pay equity. Input has been called for and a submissions deadline has been tentatively set for October 30.

The Witness noted that the Federation of Independent Businesses has expressed the opinion that legislation is unnecessary because pay equity can be achieved without it. This view, she noted, is unrealistic.

Disabled Women

The Witness advised that although a publication was prepared two or three years ago with regard to the needs of disabled women, there was some concern that it didn't truly represent the disabled community. However, a new publication is currently being developed.

Advisory Council Staff

The following is the staff complement of the Advisory Council:

- -President
- -Researcher
- -Co-ordinator of Field Work Program
- -Support Staff (3)
- -Part-Time Field Workers (6)

The Council has been approached by various women's groups to have representation and currently are considering groups of native and disabled women. The Council also feels it is in need of representation from the legal profession.

Several Committee members expressed the view that the Advisory Council should have field workers in all counties of the Province.

The Advisory Council on the
Status of Women...continued

Unfair Labor Practices

It has been brought to the attention of some Committee members that several large department stores are cutting the hours of employees to the point where they are ineligible for company benefits. This contributes to the hardships suffered by these employees, who are primarily women, many from single parent homes.

The Council is aware of the problem and is currently monitoring the situation.

Free Trade Agreeement

The Council feels that public hearings should be held to give the people of this province a better understanding of the implications of the agreement. The Council has met with a representative of the Select Committee on Free Trade and has requested copies of any submissions the Committee receives.

Meech Lake Accord

The Witness advised the Committee that women's groups in the province have genuine concerns about the Accord in that there has been very little dialogue. The Council has formed an Ad Hoc Committee on the Constitution to disseminate information to the public by way of public forums and would support having full public hearings across the province on the whole issue.

Further, the Advisory Council met with representatives of twelve (12) provincial women's organizations and together they compiled a list of six (6) concerns which were sent in the form of a letter to both the Prime Minister and the Premier. These were tabled by the Premier at the Premier's Conference in Saint John, N. B. and since then, he has indicated to the Advisory Council that although he is aware of their concerns, provincial legal counsel has expressed some concerns about their validity. As a result, the Advisory Council has requested that the provincial counsel make a presentation to them.

The Advisory Council on the
Status of Women...continued

Women in Politics

The Witness advised the Committee that the Advisory Council is fully supportive of the actions being taken by all political parties to encourage the involvement of women in politics.

Attitudes of Young People

Recent research by the Council shows that young people today are unaware of the problem of inequality between the sexes and are ill-prepared to deal with it once they are in the workforce. Part of the problem appears to lie with guidance counsellors, most of whom are male, who are discouraging female students from taking math and science courses and are steering them into low-paying, traditionally female roles. She noted that a government-sponsored conference with guidance counsellors will soon be held in an effort to address the problem.

COLLEGE OF GEOGRAPHIC SCIENCE
-Tour of Facility-

January 26, 1988

HOSTS: Mr. J. H. Clarke
Deputy Minister
Department of Advanced Education and
Job Training

Mr. John F. Wightman
Principal

Mr. John Wightman welcomed the group and made a brief presentation, in which he described the programs offered at the facility and the high calibre of students and staff. He noted that the institution, formerly known as the Land Survey Institute, has a very high success rate. As an example, he stated that every member of last year's graduating class was successful in obtaining employment approximately one month prior to graduation; in addition, had the graduating class been larger, another thirty jobs could have been filled. This, he attributed largely to the College's method of interviewing and screening applicants. Each applicant is personally interviewed and every effort is made to inform him/her of all aspects of the program and the degree of effort that must be put into their studies. He felt, however, that enrollment could be higher and an effort is being made to inform high school and university students throughout the province, of the types of programs they have to offer.

Diploma programs are offered in Surveying, Cartography, Planning, Scientific Computer Programming, Computer Graphics Programming, Geographic Information Systems and Remote Sensing. The College is very proud of its reputation as having the best concentration of innovative, inter-related programs in the geographic sciences in North America.

Following lunch in the student cafeteria, Mr. Wightman took the Committee on an extensive tour of the facility and members were given the opportunity of speaking with staff and students. Overall, the Committee was very favourably impressed.